

This month:

TAG visits JTFV

Homeland Security Academy

Iron Horse Preservation Society

er 9-11

THE CALIFORNIA SOUTHWEST BORDER MISSION

Vista

9 -11 Edition



We pay homage to the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attacks that simultaneously took place in New York, Pennsylvania, and Washington, D.C. six years ago. Nearly 3,000 innocent lives were lost on this fateful day, including the brave men and women who responded to the first emergency calls of its earliest victims.

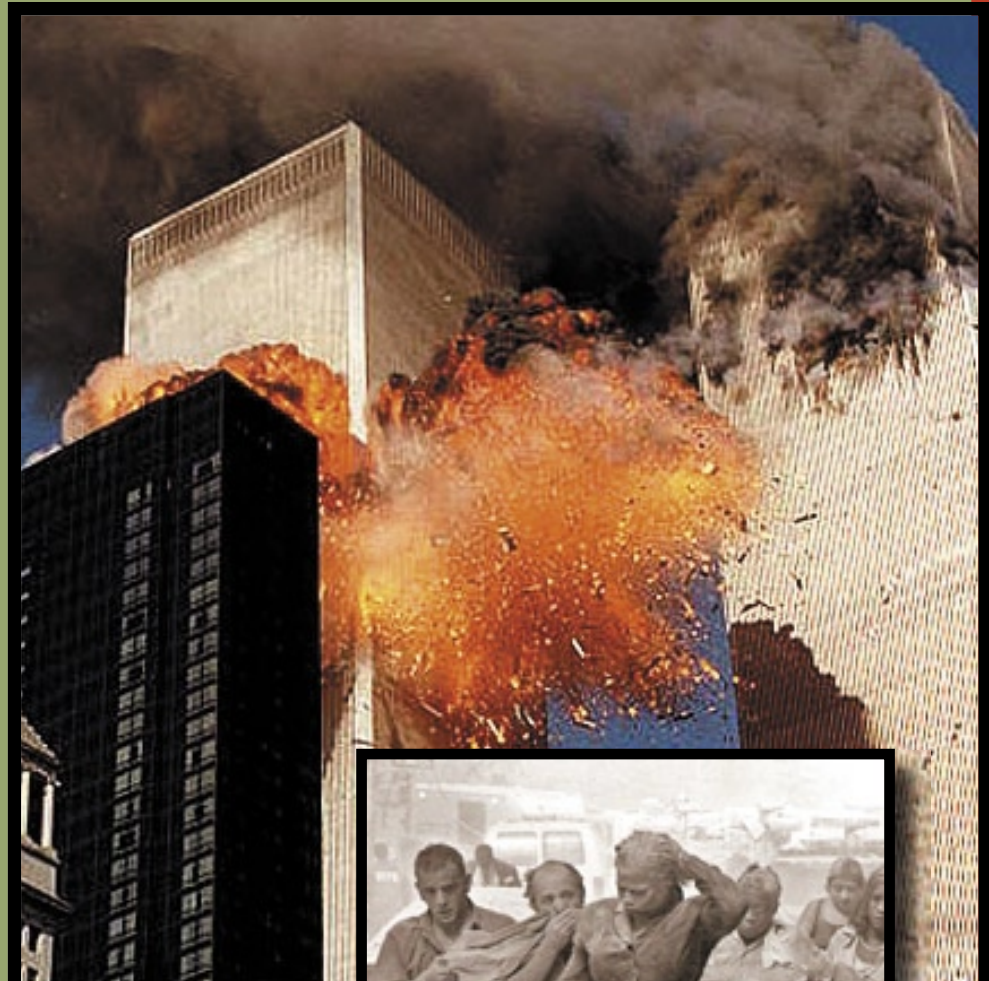
Since that day, America's War on Terrorism continues. Over 500,000 of our nation's Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors & Marines currently serve in overseas operations in our global fight.

Since that day, over 3,000 of our fellow comrades in uniform have made the ultimate sacrifice in protecting our liberties.

This month's newsletter is dedicated to all those we hold close to our hearts since the events that took place on September 11.

We Remember.

9:02 a.m.



Time and space seem to freeze as a plane hits the second Tower like a missile from hell.

In the fields of Shankesville, Pa. Flight 93 is brought down by the bravery of a few good men and women who sacrificed their lives to save their country from another terrorist attack.

9-11: a day of tragedy, a day of heroism.

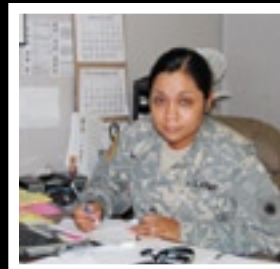


Where were you?



1st Sgt. Steven Studebaker
(HHC First Sergeant)

I was still working at Team Shield Counterdrug here in San Diego when it happened. The following month, October 2001, I deployed to Ft. Lewis, Wash., with the 49th MP Battalion under OPERATION NOBLE EAGLE. Six months after returning I went to Iraq with the 670th MP. I'll continue to be active in the defense of our country until this war against terror is finally and decisively won.



Sgt. Elisa Bernal (Command Executive Assistant)

When 9-11 happened, I was still in Basic Training. I was sitting outside the clinic waiting to be picked up from sick call. Our Drill Sergeants took us inside to watch the news. Everyone was crying. It was a very sad day.

Remember 9-11

THE NEWSLETTER OF JOINT TASK FORCE VISTA- THE CALIFORNIA SOUTHWEST BORDER MISSION



The Vista

Volume I, Issue X

www.calguard.ca.gov/CAAG-MS/jumpstart

9 -11 Edition

TAG visits JTFV

By Master Sgt. Michael Drake



Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the California Adjutant General, and his newly named Senior Enlisted Advisor for the California National Guard, Command Sgt. Maj. William Clark Jr., spent four days touring JTF VISTA operations and work sites from the California-Arizona border to the Pacific in August. The objective of their visit this time to the California side of OPERATION JUMP START was to "meet and greet the troops."

It was a hectic four-day schedule beginning in El Centro on Sunday, August 5, with a series of briefings at

the new Border Patrol training facility on the "state of the mission" from Col. Nate Reddicks, mission commander; Maj. Nick Ducich, commander of Task Force Steel Castle; and Maj. Scott Wells, Task Force El Centro commander.

The El Centro visit also included an aerial tour departing west from Naval Air Facility - El Centro aboard a Task Force Wily UH-1. Following the flight the party stopped at Dogwood Yard where Wade saw the vehicle barriers fabricated from recycled railroad track that are being placed in open areas along the border.

Wade said the rail barriers, also

known as Normandy Barriers or "X-barriers," are not only effective in stopping illegal cross-border vehicle traffic, but "are environmentally friendly, and don't disturb the fauna and flora."

At Dogwood, he also presented a California Commendation Medal to Cpl. David Gauley for his quick thinking and efforts following a car accident in El Centro on June 30. Cpl. Gauley quickly assessed that fluids were draining from the crashed vehicle and used his special skills to provide assistance to responders and calm the victim.

See TAG visits JTFV, page 6

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The editorial content is edited, prepared and provided by the JTF VISTA Public Affairs Office. All photographs are CNG or CBP photographs unless otherwise indicated.

The Vista continually solicits news items, photographs and creative works that are relevant to members of JTF VISTA, OPERATION JUMP START and the Southwest Border Mission.

Materials may be submitted to the Public Affairs Office in person at either the El Centro or San Diego sector headquarters, or FISC Logistics Support Center, Coronado Island; or by email: Michael.R.Drake@us.army.mil.

Please call (619) 545-9897/9899 for more information. Deadline is the fifth of every month.

COMMANDER'S CORNER



"And the new number is 700 mission-ready OJS personnel, moving to an end-state of 610, Sir."

That was the phrase used by a member of the J3 staff recently during the process of giving me a commander's update briefing covering among other issues--manning.

700 mission-ready personnel down from a high of 1,600 California Guardsmen on OJS orders at our zenith. The numbers always appear to be simple, but a closer look reveals that more than 2,700 California Guardsmen have volunteered to come to the OPERATION JUMP START mission, and the current manning of 700 represents the number on the mission as of 31 August 2007. (This doesn't include the estimated 2,800 rotational Guardsmen from our sister states that have served on the California border.)

2,700+ members of California's Militia have been involved in this historic mission since its July '06 inception:

So, if...

the average person contributed 30 gallons of sweat each over a 6 month tour.....that would be about 81,000 gallons.....of sweat!

if...

the average person contributed at least 3 new ideas on how best to get something done over a 6 month tour . . . that would be about 8, 100 ideas....geared to solving problems throughout the mission.

if...

the average person committed at least 2 acts of human-kindness during their tour, that would be about 5,400 acts geared toward improving the general human condition

and finally...if the average person shared at least 2 original jokes each...you and I "might have had the chance to hear" about 200 or less original laugh-lines.

(Yeah. . . I agree ... not many folks come up with original jokes.)

Ok...so, what's my point in all this rambling about numbers...? Well, numbers just don't tell the story. You and I will tell the story of this mission in our after action reports, during our assorted post-mission briefings, at the local bar (of course remembering OPSEC) and during our family gatherings. It will be our individual perspective and point of view of how things went. Some of our memories will be positive and some not-so-positive, but the time spent will definitely be a part of your lifetime memories. . .time you voluntarily contributed to this particular national effort.

As I depart the mission, I too will take memories with me; most of which will cause me to "smile" as I remember our accomplishments and good times. I deem it an honor to have served with all who have been a part of the California OPERATION JUMP START mission. I continue to be humbled by the opportunity to have served as your Joint Task Force Commander. Your willingness to follow made my job as a leader so much easier. I salute you and I thank you.

Now... 610+ of you will continue with a new Joint Task Force Commander, Col. Nuismer, and you will continue to do great things for the state of California and our nation as a whole. Again "THANK-YOU" for all you do, and I wish you only the best as you collectively go forward meeting the goals of the OPERATION JUMP START mission.

San Diego Border Patrol honors JTFV members



By Staff Sgt. Nfor Julio Barthson

During last month's quarterly awards ceremony at Border Patrol Sector Headquarters in Chula Vista, Sgt. 1st Class Jose Banuelos, Tech. Sgt. Michael Whitmore, Spc. Antonio Gomez, Spc. Nathan Anderson and Spc. Michael Stidman received Commendation Letters written by Chief Patrol Agent, San Diego Sector, Michael Fisher.

Chief Fisher's praise and recognition of the Soldiers and Airmen was the result of their efforts while assigned to the Imperial Beach Station. The group is credited with helping Border Patrol "take control of two highly problematic areas." Following is an excerpt from the letter commending the troops for actions which "truly reflect the high level of professionalism of the California National Guard":

As a member of the Imperial Beach Station Tactical Infrastructure Unit you have provided a great service

to this country in helping secure our Nation's borders. You helped the United States Border Patrol take control of two highly problematic areas within the Imperial Beach Station's area of responsibility. You assisted in designing and developing improvements in detection and prevention systems at the San Ysidro Port of departure, effectively eliminating the dangerous tactic of driving northbound in the southbound lanes of the interstate. You assisted with fence enhancements to both the primary and secondary border fence near the GSA/Old Port building at the San Ysidro Port of Entry. These enhancements have contributed to a dramatic decrease in assaults on agents, attempted entries and injuries to aliens.

Tech. Sgt. Whitmore felt a sense of accomplishment after receiving the award. "It's a great feeling," he said. "Working with the Border Patrol has been a highly rewarding experience for my career." He also expressed appreciation to his whole team for "their diligence, intelligence and devotion to the job."

Spc. Anderson, who along with the other honorees, is detailed to the Chula Vista welding station, said his award was proof that, "if you work hard, you will receive good things in return. I'm pleased that the Patrol Agent in Charge has requested to keep all the welders and engineers because I really enjoy doing this," he added.

Spc. Stidman was unable to be present for his award, but his colleagues accepted the award on his behalf.

Perhaps the greatest compliment, however, is that Chief Fisher has requested the retention of as many guardsmen as possible on OPERATION JUMP START, making it clear that JTF VISTA is not only making a difference, but that we have become a critical part of the team.

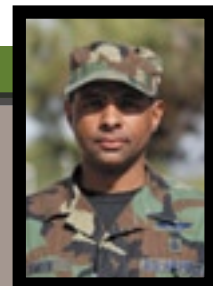


A few words from Safety NCOIC Master Sgt. Kevin Smith



Safety OIC Capt. Armando Corral (on the right) says, "Safety first!"

Would you believe that more than one-half of the injuries suffered by workers occur off the job? Someone once said that your home is your castle. If this is true, castles are dangerous places.



Approximately 24,000 individuals are killed each year in home accidents -- an average of about 65 deaths per day. The National Safety Council reports that about 3.6 million people are injured in home accidents, which means that one person in 60 was disabled for one or more days in a home accident. About 100,000 of these injuries resulted in some permanent impairment.

With these statistics, it cannot be overemphasized that what you do away from the job is vitally important. At home, we become all too familiar with our environment. Then, to our surprise, we have an accident and wonder why it didn't happen sooner. Falls and burns by gas or electrical equipment lead the list.



TAG visits JTFV



VISTA personnel escort TAG in El Centro.



TAG gets an aircraft orientation at TF Wily from CW4 Steve Cawthon.

(Cont'd from page 13)

"That is what we're about," said the Adjutant General in his praise for Cpl. Gauley. "It never ceases to amaze me what our people do. We're always ready, always there. You make me proud."

JTF VISTA Commander, Col. Nate Reddicks also presented a coin to Cpl. Gauley. In his presentation, Reddicks said, "This is what the people of California expect from their Guard. We've executed everything they've asked of us on this mission and more."

Gauley said afterwards he was honored by the recognition given by the commander and especially to have the special commendation presented by the California Adjutant General.

From there, they went to the vehicle maintenance facility where the general honored Spc. Gerardo Ballesteros, selected as Soldier of the Month, and presented a coin to Spc. Matthew Walters, for his hard work and dedication at the El Centro vehicle maintenance facility.

Following a brief meeting with Border Patrol officials, including acting Chief Roy Villareal, the party set out for a late afternoon visit to the ranch facility east of El Centro. As darkness was setting in, Maj. Gen. Wade and Command Sgt. Maj. Clark continued eastward to visit with EIT personnel near the Andrade Grade. Along the way, however, the entourage made a quick stop to visit with mounted patrol. The general jumped into the driver's seat of one of the Border Patrol's sand rails – a vehicle specially designed to travel quickly over the sand dunes of the desert region. With

goggles on and strapped tightly into the driver's seat, Wade powered out of the lot and into the darkness toward the dunes, with two quads driven by agents racing alongside. After approximately 30 minutes, the sand rail came roaring back with sand in the front pan and a beaming two-star. Clark graciously declined a dune ride in the darkness with the adjutant general but did consent to a quick horseback tour of the area.

Just short of the Arizona border at the Andrade Grade, General Wade visited with EIT personnel manning skyboxes overlooking the area and once again climbed aboard one for an aerial view. (Ironically, it was in this area just two weeks later that EITs would spot a raft floating downriver with two individuals and a large amount of marijuana on board.)

After two very full days in El Centro, they left for San Diego with a brief stop at Camp Morena along the way. In San Diego the frenetic pace continued with a tour of the NAB medical clinic given by Task Force Phoenix personnel, then a presentation by the adjutant general himself at the NAB theatre.

Addressing the assembly of JTF VISTA personnel, Wade stated he "is a resource



Maj. Gen. Wade prepares himself for a ride through the dunes.

Nevada Governor visits NVNG engineers at Camp Morena and Tecate

By Master Sgt. Michael Drake

On Thursday, August 9, Nevada Governor and former Congressman, Jim Gibbons and his adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Cindy Kirkland visited engineering operations in the Tecate area. The group flew aboard a CH-47 to Camp Morena, the Navy facility recently refurbished by Task Force Steel Castle. The 1950s-era camp, half way between San Diego and El Centro, is temporary home for 151 Nevada National Guard men and women working with Task Force Steel Castle engineers on improving border infrastructure in the immediate area.

Accompanying the VIPs was a large gathering of media to include five television news crews from Reno and Las Vegas. The group was briefed at Camp Morena by officials from Immigration and Customs Enforcement where they were shown

samples of forged passports, visas and other forms of counterfeit identification.

Then it was on to the Tecate worksites where Gibbons and Kirkland saw firsthand the work being accomplished by California and Nevada National Guardsmen. At several stops along the border the governor and adjutant general spoke with their Soldiers and Airmen, and media grabbed numerous interviews.

Governor Gibbons stressed the importance of the work the National Guard is doing at the border to further enhance our nation's security. He also cited the benefits his National Guard engineers would take back as a result of this training to better serve the people of Nevada.



manager," seeing to the needs of the California National Guard and its Soldiers and Airmen. He outlined several proposals he has made to include educational benefits, reduced rates for hunting and fishing licenses, entry to state parks, and even vehicle registration fees for those serving their state in the California National Guard. He also cited the hardships in securing passage of these benefits, especially in a time of fiscal cutbacks.

In San Diego, long days again stretched well into darkness as they had done in El Centro with another late night visit to EIT sites.

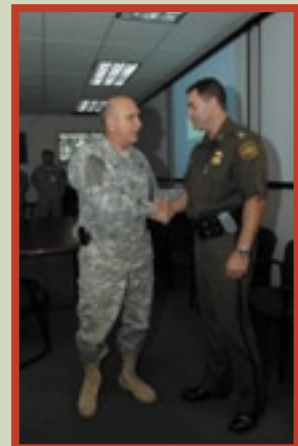
All along the tour both Wade and Clark praised the hard work, professionalism, and dedication they continually saw by JTF VISTA personnel.

"Don't forget what you are doing. You are securing our borders. It's not about building a wall. What you are doing is securing our borders," said Wade. "I think what impresses me is the same thing that has always impressed me - the fact that our Guard is always willing to step forward

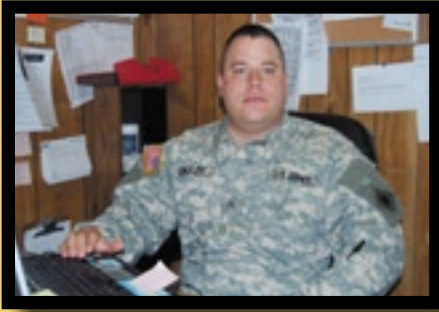
when they're called, whether it's a state or federal mission."

"Soldiers and Airmen have once again volunteered their time; they've left their families; they've left their homes; they've left their jobs and schools to come here and produce for their nation exactly what it needs—to secure their border."

"California is very proud of what you have done."



Maj. Gen. Wade "coins" Chief Patrol Agent Michael Fisher during a meeting at Chula Vista Sector Headquarters.



TF El Centro member rescues man trapped in vehicle

By Darren Simon, Staff Writer, Imperial Valley Press

A National Guardsman on Wednesday showed troops based in the Imperial Valley are not just here to guard the border.

David Gauley, a corporal in the National Guard and Beaumont resident, was driving along Broadway avenue in El Centro about 10 a.m. when an accident unfolded in front of him.

Two cars collided on Broadway, when one car driven by an unidentified man attempted a U-turn east of Eighth Street, witnesses said.

At that point, he was struck by a car driven by an unidentified woman,

Emergency crews had to use the Jaws of Life to free the man, who appeared uninjured.

The woman was taken by ambulance to El Centro Regional Medical Center. There was no information on whether she was seriously hurt.

Gauley was the first on the scene.

"As a soldier you can't turn your back on a citizen" Gauley said. "A few minutes can save lives."

Gauley said as soon as he saw the collision he contacted his National Guard sergeant and told him to call 911.

Then Gauley checked to see whether any fuel had spilled. When he determined it was only coolant leaking from the vehicles, Gauley went to the woman.

With the help of another resident who translated, Gauley asked her a few questions to test her level of consciousness.

At the same time, he held her neck to keep her stabilized until authorities arrived.

"She was shaking at that point," Gauley said "I assured her that I was there to help."

Law enforcement authorities credited Gauley for his quick actions.

(Culled from the Imperial Valley Press, Thursday, June 21, 2007)



On Friday, July 20, JTF VISTA received a group of visitors unlike any other that has entered its area of operations since the beginning of the southwest border mission over one year ago. Though some of the visitors had connections with the military and law enforcement in some capacity, they all came this day simply as civilians. They came as a group of graduate students from the San Diego State University (SDSU) concentrating on homeland security studies.

For the occasion, the JTFV commander let the professor in him come out. During what would have been a usual update briefing at TF Steel Castle headquarters, Col. Nate Reddicks applied humor to his discourse as he gave the students a historical background of the southwest border mission, recent accomplishments, and a general overview of the mission's organic structure in California.

The students responded enthusiastically asking many questions, some of them pointed, of Col. Reddicks and Capt. Richard Noyes of TF Steel Castle, who continued with the briefings during field stops at Tin Can, Russian Hill and Arnie's Point.

"Are you not afraid that the drug cartels are now targeting some of your staff with bribes, or that their families are being blackmailed, even as we speak?" one of the students asked.

"Is the fact that the National Guard is reducing its



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

Homeland Security Academy

By Staff Sgt. Nfor Julio Barthson



personnel proof that Border Patrol is meeting its recruitment targets? And if it's not the case, then why are you sending some troops home when the border is not yet secure?" another asked. Those were just some of the questions that JTFV leaders had to address. The San Diego State grad students also wanted to know if the mission will be renewed at the end of 2008; any correlation between what is happening at the border here and elsewhere in the world, particularly Iraq and Afghanistan; and, more important for most of them, what would be the next generation of border security tools after the current planned infrastructure is in place?

Wendy Lyons, a Master's student in the SDSU Homeland Security program, also pursuing a PhD in Chemistry, said she learned a lot from the trip. "It was a different thing for me to see the real obstacles that the National Guard faces day-to-day on the job, and to see all these things that the engineers are doing," she said. "It would cost so much more if civilian contractors had to do this work, and it still wouldn't make us more secure than with the National Guard," she added.

Dr. Jeffrey McIlwain, Co-Director of the Homeland Security Graduate Program at SDSU, accompanied his students on the tour. It was part of a course on "Border Security: the Case of the United States and Mexico" with the hypothesis that border security is a major area of policy concern. "The main question to answer during this learning trip is, 'how do we prepare tomorrow's decision-makers to understand the perspectives of security on both sides of the border?'" he told The Vista.

After their field trip at the border, the students were also scheduled to meet with Border Patrol, and even travel to the other side of the border in Mexico, to continue in their quest for knowledge. However, as Shannon Files and Mark Flahan told us after visiting with JTF VISTA, the most important thing for them was "to see first hand what is actually happening on the ground, from the perspective of American servicemen, as opposed to what we always hear from the very slanted news media."



SAN DIEGO STATE
UNIVERSITY

9-11:

We Will Never Forget

editorial special

By Staff Sgt. Nfor Julio Barthson

Most of us still have fresh memories of the day when a murderous gang of radical Islamist zealots killed more than 3,000 unsuspecting and innocent people, striking us in the light of day on our own great nation's soil. We remember how they brought down the Twin Towers in New York and reduced a whole flank of the Pentagon to rubble.

The vivid images of that fatal day will never be erased from our memories. Not in a whole lifetime. Civilian airplanes, turned into deadly weapons by terrorists, exploding into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and rural Pennsylvania, are events that will forever mark our collective memory.

Simple landmarks, though inanimate in nature, take on a life of their own with distinct personalities and qualities as if they were human beings. Here in the United States, that is the case of the White House, Capitol Hill, the Liberty Tower, Mount Rushmore, the Hollywood Hills sign, and Abraham Lincoln's monument in Washington, D.C. The World Trade Center's Twin Towers was one such monument, and the Pentagon still is.



I knew those historic buildings before evil struck them. Maybe not intimately, but enough to shed real tears and feel a personal loss when 9-11 occurred. When I first visited the United States as an intern journalist from Cameroon in the fall of 1995, I lived in the Washington, D.C. metro area and drove past the Pentagon on my way to work everyday. I also traveled to New York City to cover some political events during a United Nations annual conference.

In downtown Manhattan, I was literally transfixed by the presence of the tall skyscrapers, and I felt so special being able to walk through the World Trade Center vicinity. After 9-11, I visited Ground Zero with my family during the Christmas 2001 season to pay my respects. I could hardly hold back the tears as I stared at the gaping hole where the Twin Towers once stood.

Like most Americans and residents of this country, I can also remember where I was, what I was doing, and what I felt watching those buildings crumble in front of my eyes on September 11th. I was home in my Bellflower apartment that early west coast morning, when I turned the TV on and first learned that a plane had "mistakenly" flown into the first



Shanksville, Penn.



West Orange, N.J.



Lake Charles, La.



Winslow, Ariz.

tower. As I stayed home and continued to watch, I almost passed out when I saw the second plane fly into the second tower. As it became clear that America was under attack, I also realized that my life as a future American citizen would be more active than I had ever imagined.

Like many American servicemen, I have been honored since that day to serve our country under OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, now at the southwest border under OPERATION JUMPSTART, and several other active duty military assignments in between. Others have paid the ultimate price while fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq to make sure that I can continue living in freedom and help prevent another 9-11. I count myself a very lucky American, who became a U.S. citizen only as recently as 2003, to be among the men and women who now have the obligation of continuing to serve our country so that it may NEVER happen again.

There are certain things that many Americans who were born and raised here in the U.S. may often take for granted, but that are simply too important for someone like me who was born overseas and chose to migrate here in search of opportunity and a better life. It is commonplace to hear that many Americans took their freedoms for granted until the aftermath of 9-11, which now requires more sacrifice from everyone as we try to prevent another deadly blow like 9-11 from ever occurring again.

For me, 9-11 had a silver lining in the dark smoke and dust that rose from those crumbled buildings; it was a day that reaffirmed, in my eyes, what America truly stands for: liberty, justice and opportunity for everyone who works hard. It became clear to me that, at all times, we must be ready to defend the essence of our existence as a nation and continue to educate the rest of the world about the goodness of our people so that they can join us in fighting the kind of evil philosophy that guides the terrorists.

We do not need a September 11th anniversary to remind us of the new challenges that we face as a people. For us who have chosen to serve, everyday is the 9-11 that we will never forget, and that we will never allow again to happen.

Where were you?

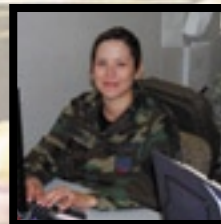
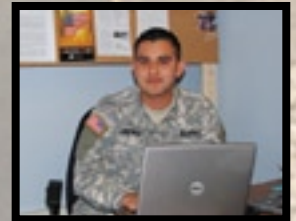


1st Lt. Christina Douglas
(Executive Officer, TF Wily)

I was in my living room watching the news when I saw the first plane hit. I knew immediately that our unit would be activated. I was an E-4 at the time on ADSW orders for a medical detachment in Virginia. I heard about the second plane when I was on my way to work. Our unit was activated, but we did not have to assist with the recovery effort. After that tragic event I decided to stay in the VAARNG full-time and get my commission. Soon after, I was off to flight school and ended up making my way to the CAARNG. 9-11 made me realize that we are not invincible and tragedies can happen on our soil. The event gave me a better understanding of what we represent as soldiers. The people of this country look to us in times of need. We are here to protect the people of the United States from enemies foreign and domestic. It made me proud to wake up every morning and put on this uniform and it made me proud to serve along side all of my brothers and sisters in uniform.

Sgt. Jose Sanchez (J2 Staff)

On 9-11, I was in Darwin Australia as a young Marine, having just come off of a Navy ship. I was in a club when the shore patrol rushed in and asked everybody to report back to the ship. They told us we would be leaving within the hour. I didn't know where or why, nor did any of my buddies. But when we got back to the ship, that's when they told us what had happened in New York with the Twin Towers. They also told us there and then that we would be sailing directly to the Arabian Sea. It took us a month to get there, and we were immediately sent to fight in Afghanistan. Many of us were in shock and just cried during that long journey, most of all because we never had the opportunity to really say a real goodbye to our families when we left. It was a tragic and sorrowful moment in my life because I was so afraid I would never see my family again.



Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Larson
(Personnel Admin, J1)

By the time the second plane hit the towers, all of my co-workers and me at Counterdrug headquarters were in our J3 section, glued to the television, watching CNN... in complete disbelief.



Fallon, Nev.



Belen, N.Mex.

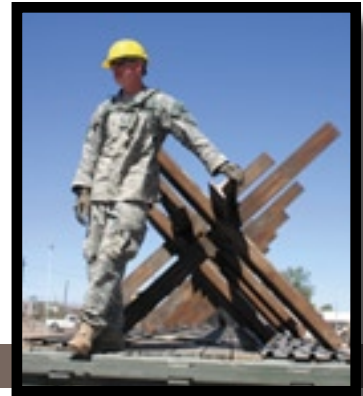


Barstow, Calif.



O'Fallon, Mo.

Iron Horse Preservation Society provides rail for anti-vehicle barriers



JTFV's Col. Nate Reddicks presents Joe and Jim Hattrup of the Iron Horse Preservation Society with a plaque in appreciation of their efforts to secure and deliver rail for use at the Southwest border. The rails will be used as X-barriers to reinforce border security around El Centro.

"We have just witnessed a perfect example of how a voluntary, not-for-profit organization can work together with National Guard, in support of the Border Patrol, to secure our borders and protect our nation."



Soldiers of the Massachusetts National Guard 1058th Transportation Company pose near barriers they placed in the desert of the El Centro sector.

By Staff Sgt. Nfor Julio Barthson

With these words, JTF VISTA Commander, Col. Nate Reddicks concluded a unique ceremony at the Dogwood Yard in El Centro on Thursday, July 26. Under rising outside temperatures that dictated a speedy exchange of kind words by all, Col. Reddicks went on to offer a plaque full of symbolism to two civilians representing the Iron Horse Preservation Society, Inc. – a nonprofit organization that has teamed up with JTF VISTA to provide some much-needed material to enhance border security.

Joe Hattrup, president, and his brother Jim Hattrup, vice-president of the Iron Horse Preservation Society, received the magnificent plaque in recognition of their efforts to secure and deliver some 30 additional miles of rail material. This rail is currently welded together and deployed along the border in the El Centro sector as anti-vehicle barriers.

"The rail that you have donated will be used to deter movement of competitors across the border," Col. Reddicks told the Hattrup brothers. He also reminded the audience that the rail delivery had been achieved swiftly thanks to cooperation between the National Guard and the Iron Horse Preservation Society.

El Centro Chief Patrol Agent, Roy Villarreal, also thanked the Hattrups for their contribution, telling them that "the anti-vehicle barriers that will be built with these rails will indeed enhance our national security."

The Iron Horse project began as an idea from JTFV members working at the J-3 shop. Through the encouragement of Lt. Col. Stan Zezotarski, the idea gained traction and eventually made its

way to National Guard headquarters in Sacramento. From there, the Iron Horse Preservation Society was contacted for a partnership that has provided a necessary resource to the deterrence strategy at the southwest border.

The Iron Horse Preservation Society, based in Reno, Nev., assists in the conservation of historic railroad assets and in the education of the public. Co-founders Joe and Jim Hattrup have several years of experience in railroad track removal, planning and engineering. One of their main goals for the future, according to the organization's mission statement, will be continuing to team up with the National Guard to supply rail for the border security project.

"The Border Patrol requirements will establish exactly how much rail needs to be delivered over a specified period of time," the document states. To accomplish these goals, Iron Horse hopes to deliver 24,000 linear feet of rail (almost 5 miles) by the end of August 2007 and, in the long term, 144,000 feet (about 28 miles) of rail for National Guard anti-vehicle barrier projects at the southwest border.

As part of JTF Vista's appreciation, the two brothers were given the opportunity to fly in a National Guard UH-1 helicopter to get an aerial perspective of the barriers. During the flight they saw how the miles of rail were being used to effectively deter illegal immigrants from driving across the open desert areas of El Centro.

"What a difference these anti-vehicle barriers have made!" Command Sgt. Major Waterhouse enthusiastically told *The Vista*. "Before, our RVSS would show competitors' vehicles, drug and human smugglers, just cruising across the desert stretch without any problem right onto the 98 freeway. That was their main avenue of approach. With the introduction of the rail barriers, we have succeeded in delaying them. They have to look for other ways to go around, allowing a faster response time for Border Patrol agents."

At the end of the Dogwood Yard ceremony, Col. Reddicks made it a point to personally congratulate Lt. Col. Zozotarski and the J-3 staff for their ingenuity and perseverance in making a creative idea a very effective reality.



Staff Sgt. Alan Shields and Sgt. 1st Class Frank Guizar of TF Steel Castle have been instrumental in streamlining X-barrier production and safety.

Getting Jiggy at Dogwood

By Capt. Kimberly Holman

After the recent triumphant rail delivery by the Iron Horse Preservation Society, it's time to introduce a few key players who have helped make this project so successful: the designers and engineers of the "X-barrier" jig and anti-vehicular barrier (AVB) lifting device.

Dogwood Yard in El Centro is home to a group of TF Steel Castle Soldiers who together came up with the plan behind the jig construction system that has improved production flow and safety in the construction of the X-barriers, or anti-vehicular barriers. The jig, or template, allows several barriers to be produced in a single day of work, thus increasing workload efficiency due to ease of production.

Sgt. 1st Class Frank Guizar, NCOIC for the project explained, "Now that we have the jigs, we simply cut the rails to size and set them into the template to be welded. There's no guesswork."

Before the jigs came into use, only two or three barriers were produced in a day. Now they can make anywhere from 7-10 a day.

The barrier lifting apparatus is another tool that has greatly improved productivity and safety in X-barrier production. This tool provides more stability when moving the barriers from the yard to the truck, and out to the border.

"Before the AVB lifting device, we were using straps

See JIGGY, page 15



The barrier lifting rig provides safety and stability when moving X-barriers.



J-4 Billeting: the story of the BPAs

By 1st. Lt. Antonio Maristela

If there was one asset deserving of honorable mention in the duration of OPERATION JUMP START's mission, it would be that of J-4's very own billeting staff.

The billeting staff, originally a staff of eight personnel, is supervised by Air Force Master Sgt. Jay Parrish. "Our mission", he humbly states "is to provide billeting for short-term and long-term housing across all task forces from San Diego to El Centro to Indio."

What most people don't know is that they not only provide quality billeting, but also allow Soldiers and Airmen to do so without the headaches of travel voucher payment delays or late payment problems.

Such was the scenario in the beginning of OJS, when the priority was to expeditiously accommodate the inflow of hundreds of personnel within a month's time. They needed to provide immediate housing solutions as the Soldiers and Airmen prepared themselves for mission in-briefings and in-processing.

"Our first crisis in the beginning was operations management... We actually had to create a standard specific to this mission," said Master Sgt. Parrish, recollecting his duties a year ago.

He paints a picture of his department as a mobile insurance claims office after a hurricane, undergoing the stresses of setting up shop, identifying available support staff, and quickly training them to mitigate the issues at hand.

"In the beginning we were dealing with supply and demand, trying to find adequate housing for all incoming personnel, while the entire naval fleet decides to return to home port," recalls Master Sgt. Parrish. "During this time, we were addressing the question of where to house personnel with very limited choices, especially if we were going to depend on the local naval resources."

Fortunately, the in-processing of personnel was conducted at a controllable rate, and the staff acquainted themselves quickly with resources made available by the U.S. Navy at

32nd Street Naval Facility, Coronado Island, and Point Loma.

"As the mission progressed, we started experiencing finance hiccups concerning the administrative processing of travel vouchers, not to mention the difference in standards between Army and Air Force, the use of government travel cards, and paying the rent in an expensive area of California," said Master Sgt. Parrish. "What further complicated the issue was the high tab Soldiers and Airmen were running up just to get to work. It got really ugly when Soldiers couldn't pay their bills, because the travel vouchers were taking so long to process. Many Soldiers didn't have the money."

The most significant solution created by billeting was the Blanket Purchase Order Agreements, or BPAs. These accounts were first initiated by Master Sgt. Parrish and supported by the J-4 Staff, led by Lt. Col. Dana Dorsey. The BPAs were merely a consolidated collection of accounts made available by seven local corporate housing vendors. Due to the range of operations spanning from the coasts of Imperial Beach and North Island to the desert region of El Centro and Indio, these accounts were necessary to centralize soldiers in common work areas, provide quality of life living arrangements while away from home, and secure credibility and trust with housing providers who could work with military payment disbursement schedules.

Since the creation of the BPAs, the billeting staff has been able to create an official mission specific housing standard for OJS. Also, they have been able to focus on more pertinent housing issues such as quality of life and safety. Most importantly, they have been able to save an estimated 50% on the initial housing budget.

Now, one year later, as the team undergoes downsizing, the next challenge will be to finally provide closure to the BPA accounts.

"Our last headache will be to finally clean all the rooms and return all the keys," said Master Sgt. Parrish.

Our success here at JTF VISTA would not have been possible without the contributions of the billeting staff and J-4. Many thanks to Sgt. Bashon Simms, Staff Sgt. Daniel Madrid, Sgt. Mark Bernal, Spc. David Grimaldi, Master Sgt. William Thompson and Staff Sgt. Buck Garrett.



Job fairs and opportunities for departing troops



By Staff Sgt. Nfor Julio Barthson

Sgt. 1st Class Tammy Johnson

For several months leading up to the final phase of the much anticipated personnel drawdown, JTF VISTA leadership has encouraged troops to attend a series of ongoing job fairs that bring together employers, job agencies and jobseekers from military bases and National Guard armories.

The Kearny Mesa Armory in San Diego has hosted at least two such events in the last few months. The California Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (CAL-EANGUS) has often sponsored the "Employment and Wellness Symposium" for military members, veterans and family at Kearny Mesa and at the Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base.

Sgt. 1st Class Tammy Johnson, assigned as Resource NCOIC for transitioning Soldiers and Airmen by JTFV commander, Col. Nate Reddicks, has maintained contact with organizers, local authorities, and civilian and military employers, to ensure that JTF VISTA servicemembers receive the best information possible about job opportunities. "The job fairs are not mandatory events, but I encourage everyone to attend, especially if you'll need a job in the future," she said.

For any information regarding job search, resume writing, job training, upcoming job fairs and all available opportunities for transitioning Soldiers and Airmen, contact Sgt. 1st Class Johnson at (619) 666-3446 or (619) 336-2032 OPTION 4.



Certificate of Achievement in Safety

Lt. Col. Marks of the Nevada National Guard's 992nd troop command receives praise from JTFV Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Greg Clark for "excellence in safety management." The troop command attained a 100% accident free record during the duration of their rotation with Task Force Steel Castle. The leadership at all levels distinguished itself and should be very proud of a job well done.

JIGGY, (Cont'd from page 13)

to lift them with either a forklift or a crane," said Sgt. Alan Shields, known amongst his peers as being the best welder and steel fabricator on the task force. He designed the jig for the barriers and the lifting barrier beam. "We actually had some of the beams break in half under the stress of their own weight when we were lifting them with the straps. This apparatus supports the beam so that it can be easily moved with either a forklift or crane, and is much more stable."

Sgt. Shields also came up with a design which allows barriers to be made with a single backbone, as opposed to the original design which had three. This reduces the amount of rail being used, which ultimately saves money in materials. Additionally, the barriers now weigh about 4750 lbs. This is still very heavy, but much less than the previous 9000 lbs. "Working with this smaller yet still substantial-

sized barrier is more safe, and it allows us to make more of them," explains Sgt. Shields.

"People who work with Sgt. Shields are continually amazed. He has a way of teaching others that is truly remarkable," commented Sgt. 1st Class Guizar. "He can teach the new guys how to weld upside down, which isn't easy. Even the weakest link is very, very capable out here."



Dogwood welders use jig template for easier X-barrier construction.

Air Force discontinues use of base decals

by Senior Master Sgt. Matt Proietti
Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

Air Force officials are working with other services to allow its people to enter installations without requiring them to display a base decal on their vehicles.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley recently ended use of the sticker, officially called a DD Form 2220, on Air Force installations due to cost, a lack of utility and long-term threats facing bases.

The decal was developed in the 1970s as part of a vehicle registration and traffic management system, not to bolster security, said Col. William Sellers, the Air Force chief of force protection and operations for security forces.

"There was a clear and definable need for this system (then)," he said. "A nationwide vehicle registration database did not exist, insurance was not required by all states and a process was needed to expedite vehicle entry onto installations."

Air Force officials began questioning the value of the vehicle registration system in 2005 due to security concerns.

Many people incorrectly viewed the decal as being designed to bolster security, Colonel Sellers said. In actuality, the decal lessens it by identifying vehicles of Airmen and civilian workers as potential terror targets and may lure gate guards into complacency.

Laws now require motorists to have a legal driver's license issued by a state, proof of vehicle ownership/state registration, evidence of insurance, and safety and emissions inspections. A national vehicle registration system is used by all civilian and military police departments in the country.

"We've been putting our own personnel through a process that simply duplicates state and federal mandatory requirements," Colonel Sellers said.

If a vehicle from a Navy base is parked illegally on an Army installation, the military police can't use its DD Form 2220 to track the owner because the two services don't share vehicle databases. Instead, the police will use the license plate number or vehicle identification number to obtain information via two national systems that provide comprehensive driver, vehicle data and access to law enforcement agency information, the colonel said.

Security forces and gate guards now check the ID of each person entering an Air Force installation, Colonel

Sellers said. This provides better security than a base decal ever did because:

- The vehicle displaying it could have been sold with the decal on it.
- Its owner may have left the service and not removed the decal.
- The number on the decal could be duplicated.
- The decal could be counterfeited.
- The decal may have been removed from another vehicle.
- The vehicle may have been stolen.

Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., hasn't seen an increase in gate traffic since it stopped issuing base decals six months ago, said Master Sgt. James Osban, the NCO in charge of the 509th Security Forces Squadron Police Services.

"We're identifying the people coming on base and not the vehicle," he said. "We've done a 100 percent ID check for years."

Air Force officials have asked other services to allow entry of its people to their installations by honoring their common access cards, appropriate identification or even by issuing them a DD Form 2220, which would enter them in another branch's database. In many cases, Air Force people visit other installations to shop.

"That translates into dollars for their Soldiers, Sailors and Marines," Colonel Sellers said. "Commanders want Air Force personnel on their bases."

Some within the Defense Department feel the registration system still has utility, regardless of inherent weaknesses, Colonel Sellers said. Installation commanders worried about the time it takes to access bases "need to face today's security challenges."

"Using it puts the military in serious danger of losing credibility with its own personnel and the general public," Colonel Sellers said. "The threat is here, it's real and we must continuously improve our processes and procedures."

The military branches have spent millions on new entry points, but have failed to review the process of how they allow entry onto an installation, Colonel Sellers said.

"The strength of a redesigned gate is defeated if the process to enter is flawed," he said. "Our first line of defense becomes irrelevant. The priority is not expediting entry, but knowing who is entering."



MWR showcase:

TF El Centro Soldier takes 3rd place in Pankration Tournament

By 1st. Lt. Antonio Maristela

Ask the Soldiers and Airmen stationed in El Centro what they would be doing on their normal Saturday, and you might expect to hear they were off to the beach, relaxing at home, washing the car, or cleaning the house. But one Soldier, Spc. Terance Julian, has a rather different pastime. For him, the weekend of August 11 was the culmination of two months' floor and circuit training, which he accomplished daily after coming off shift in the high El Centro heat. He was off to an "Ultimate Fighting", or Pankration tournament in San Diego at Balboa Park.

Pankration is a Greek term from the words "pan" which means all, and "kratos" which means strength or power. It is said to have been invented by the mythological heroes Hercules and Theseus. The competition rules are simple: you may apply whatever skills you know against your opponent so long as you don't apply deliberate trauma to the head. Matches are won through strategic dominance, and decided by a slapping motion by your opponent to signal submission and surrender.

Given all the hype behind the exotic combat sport, and thanks to cable sports coverage of all too familiar names like "Gracie" from the Brazilian Gracie Jujitsu warrior pedigree, or even the "Ortiz" and "Shamrocks," the competitive combative art of mixed martial arts is now a common weekend attraction.

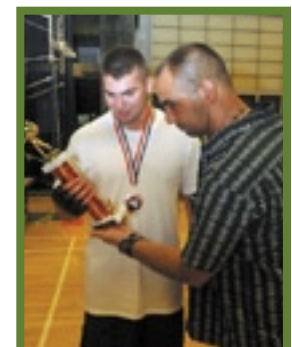
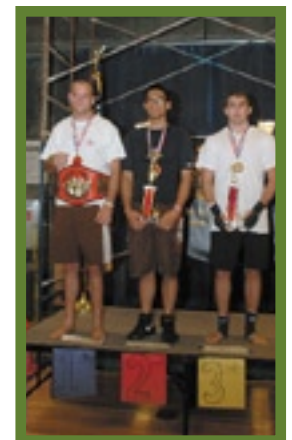
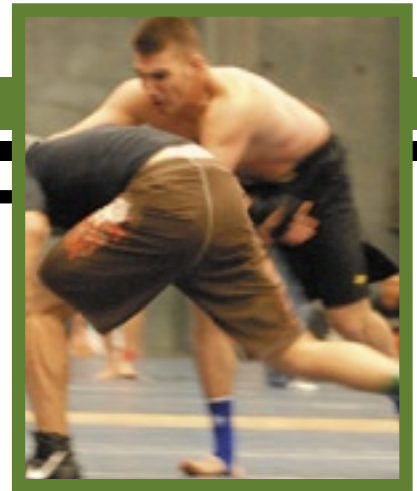
There is no ring, cage or ropes to stand and hurl your body into like they do in cable wrestling. The stage is nothing more than a ten foot circle on a mat. The opponents are given five minutes to clobber their opponent by any style they wish to use. If you look carefully, you might see the influence of boxing, Muay Thai kick boxing, Chinese fighting art forms, Japanese-influenced attack stances, and the Brazilian grappling technique. And then there are those who just decide to bring a rawness that could only be described as primal.

Spc. Julian's training regimen was simple. He ran three days a week. He lifted weights twice a week. He devoted one day for floor training with his coach, Sgt. 1st Class Tackett, whom he met through a mutual friend, Spc. Mary Berumen, while on mission.

Spc. Julian took to the mat and competed against two rivals for the National Title of Advanced Light Weight Division. Amongst flurries of Muay Thai kickboxing and grappling throw-downs, the Soldier fought for his chance at the title.

The entire experience was a valuable lesson to have learned in view of his future pursuits to become a cage fighting athlete. "I still have a lot of work to do, but it's something I have to prepare for mentally and physically," he said. "The knowledge I get from my training and from my friends is what I value the most."

Spc. Julian received a third place trophy; his education was priceless.



TROOPTalk

How do you like to spend your spare time in El Centro?



Spc. John McCrory (Dogwood)

There's a lot of fishing and four-wheeling to do. Sometimes a couple of Army guys and some Border patrol guys will get together and go wheeling in the dunes.



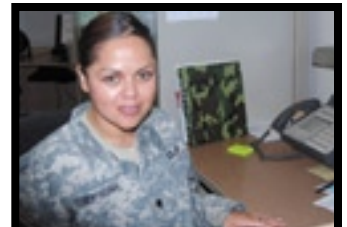
Sgt. Jerald MacLeod (Dogwood Yard, El Centro)

What I do for fun is to go off-roading and four-wheeling in the desert on weekends.



Sgt. Amber Acker (RVSS ELS)

I've been to the mall here maybe two or three times. There's also a pool hall that I've been to a couple of times, but I usually just hang out with my roommate or go to San Diego. There are a few cool places in Pacific Beach that we really like.



Spc. Mary Berumen-Urbina (Admin. Supp. ELS)

Usually, during the weekdays, I like to work out. On the weekends, I like to go to the movies or San Diego, where I'm learning to surf. I'm also studying Psychology at Vincennes University on NAF. I'm just trying to stay as productive as possible while on mission.



Spc. Cuauhtemoc Flores (Dogwood)

I live in the Imperial Valley, so I enjoy spending time with my family and barbequing on most weekends.



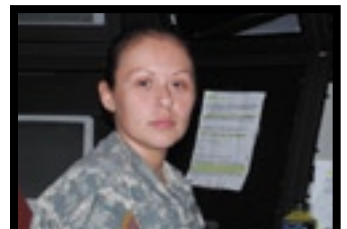
Master Sgt. Cary Verstynen (Dogwood)

I like to go to San Diego. There are some great restaurants downtown in the Gaslamp quarter.



Staff Sgt. Thomas Brown (Dogwood)

I don't go out much on weekends, but the Chaplain down here hosts a fishing trip every few months and a lot of people enjoy it very much.



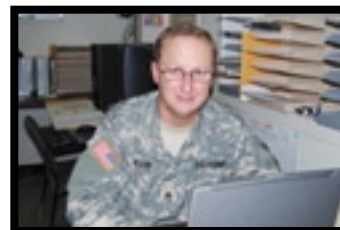
PFC Ana Ruiz (RVSS ELS)

Well, sometimes I go to the dunes for some four-wheeling. Lots of people go there during the holidays. At the NAF there're free movies. There's also a drive-in which is kind of nice too. Some people might say there's not very much else out here, but if you're looking for fun, you can always find it.



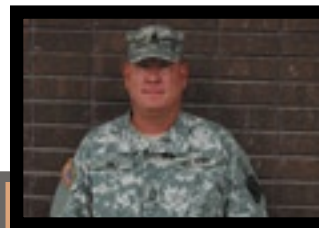
Sgt. Arthur Lynch (Calexico Station, TF El Centro)

There're actually a few things to do that are really fun. There's the drive-in theater... that's a blast! NAF has go-karts and Thursday is Karaoke night. At the Barbara Worth there's golfing, water polo and Karaoke on Saturdays. A few weeks ago they had Hawaiian Night, so a few of us got all dressed up in our Hawaiian shirts and flip flops. It was a great time.



Staff Sgt. Bob Webb (Command Staff, TF El Centro)

Usually we go to the movies. Some people from the shop will get together to go about once a week; but generally we're too busy to go out a whole lot.



Sgt. 1st. Class Steven Cole (El Centro PAO Representative)

We have a good track record of organizing MWR activities for our troops in El Centro, and we have a lot more planned for the future.

In the past, we organized a Christmas party, several dinners at the American Legion, at the Moose Lodge and the Elks Lodge. We also ran a football and softball leagues, and we're in the third season of our bowling competition involving some 25 National Guard participants. We have also held numerous BBQs at the NAF El Centro pool, at Brunner's Hotel and at the Barbara Worth Gold Resort Hotel where many of our troops live. We have also organized fishing trips to San Diego on several occasions, with about 40 people participating in each trip. There's another fishing trip coming up soon.

We're currently planning an event with a nearby casino where any of our troops who sign up will actually be bussed out there for fun activities, including the popular Ultimate Fighting tournaments. After the completion of the ongoing downsizing, we'll be able to plan new events based on how many people we have with us. As usual, we shall be sending out flyers and information about discount opportunities at places like Knotts Berry Farm, Sea World, and others.



Spc. Leif Horton (Dogwood)

What I like best out here is fishing and four-wheeling.



Staff Sgt. Manolito Atanaya (Dogwood)

I usually go home to North Hollywood on weekends. Burgers and beer and the occasional fishing trip, that's what's mainly going on out here.

Where were you?



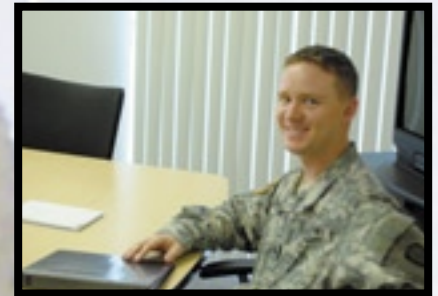
Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Waterhouse
(CSM, TF El Centro)

I know this sounds unbelievable, but September 11th, 2001 was actually my 25th wedding anniversary. I was at home in Concord, Calif., when it happened. We had planned a dinner out for my wife, our two sons and me. Eventually, we still went out for dinner, but you can understand the celebration obviously had a different tone. Things have never been the same since then. My son is now an active duty Army Captain on his second deployment in Iraq; so it has been a hectic six years for us since 9-11.



Capt. Chad Rice (S3, TF San Diego)

On that sad day, I was at Camp Roberts. One of my Soldiers woke me up to tell me that a plane just hit the Twin Towers. At first, I thought it was a joke. A couple of us went to the PX to watch it on TV. It was a very numbing event. We just stood there and watched for hours. The next day, we had a little ceremony in sympathy for the dead and missing. Since 9-11, my military life has completely changed. I have done several active duty tours here in the United States and overseas.



Sgt. Joseph Turner
(TF Steel Castle Staff)

I was at Fort Leonard Wood, at basic training on the rifle range when 9-11 hit. Someone who had been at sick call sneaked a peek at a TV while he was there, and came back telling us all what he had seen. We couldn't believe it. The whole post immediately went into lockdown. You know how people are when they come out of basic - all fired up and ready to go. Well, we came out of there ready to kill everything! It was no longer a question of "if" we'd be sent to war. No more someday; we were going now.



Capt. Douglas McElDowney
(OPS Officer, TF Steel Castle)

I actually slept on top of one of the World Trade Center buildings as an 11-year old Boy Scout. I got a t-shirt for it in 1983, and still have it. Now my daughter wears it. Kind of ironic... So, I have a very real memory of the towers, and that memory was shattered by the images I saw the morning of 9-11. That day was truly the end of America's innocence.

9:41 a.m.



1st Lt. Randy Cedillos
(OIC, TF Phoenix)

I was not yet in the military when our nation was attacked. I was still in my second year at the University of Southern California on 9-11. After those events, I contacted the Army ROTC Department at USC and raised my right hand. With two family members already in the military, I felt it was also my duty as an American to serve our nation. Subsequently, I graduated USC in 2004 with a commission as a Medical Service Corps Officer.



CW3 Carl Gutierrez
(Network Engineer, J6)

I actually went out jogging after the first crash. It thought it was just a small plane crash as most media outlets had initially announced. After I came back, the second plane hit. That's when I knew we were in deep trouble. Like many Americans, I just wondered: where do we go from here? I went to work and we continued watching on TV. It really hit me when the towers collapsed, and I knew then that my life would change forever.



American Flight 77, en route from Dulles Airport in Washington, D.C. crashed into the Pentagon in Arlington, Va. 64 passengers were on board.



"Today, we gather to be reassured that God hears the lamenting and bitter weeping of Mother America because so many of her children are no more. Let us now seek that assurance in prayer for the healing of our grief stricken hearts, for the souls and sacred memory of those who have been lost. Let us also pray for divine wisdom as our leaders consider the necessary actions for national security, wisdom of the grace of God that as we act, we not become the evil we deplore."

- Rev. Nathan Baxter, Dean of Washington National Cathedral

"Time is passing. Yet, for the United States of America, there will be no forgetting September the 11th. We will remember every rescuer who died in honor. We will remember every family that lives in grief. We will remember the fire and ash, the last phone calls, the funerals of the children. "

**- President George W. Bush,
November 11, 2001**



All photos of 9-11 were taken from the following literature:

One Day in History, The Days That Changed the World. Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 2007

One Nation, America Remembers September 11, 2001. Time Inc. Home Entertainment, 2006

